



ELECTION FOCUS 2008



April 18, 2008

No. 3

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Latest News

[Democrats Try to Win over Pennsylvania 4th's Superdelegate](#) (04-16-2008)

Hillary Clinton is leading polls in the run-up to a "must-win" primary

With Pennsylvania's April 22 primary the next big contest for Democratic presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, undecided voters in the Pennsylvania 4th Congressional District are hearing directly from the candidates and their campaign representatives. Both candidates are especially eager to win over one undecided Pennsylvania 4th voter -- the district's congressional representative, Jason Altmire. The Democrat who represents the western part of the state is also a superdelegate. Winning his support would put Clinton or Obama one vote closer to the nomination.

[Democratic Presidential Nomination Race Seen Ending by July 4](#) (04-14-2008)

Role of national party conventions has diminished in recent years

The race for the Democratic presidential nomination will probably end in June and certainly by America's Independence Day on July 4, political analyst Larry Sabato tells America.gov. Sabato, a University of Virginia professor of politics, said the race will end "immediately" if Illinois Senator Barack Obama pulls an upset and defeats New York Senator Hillary Clinton in the Pennsylvania primary April 22, a development the professor said would guarantee Obama's nomination. A win by Clinton in Pennsylvania is expected to prolong the race until the last Democratic primaries are held June 3 in Montana and South Dakota.

[National Conventions Going Green](#) (04-14-2008)

Republicans and Democrats seek to make conventions environmentally friendly

Although the 2008 Republican and Democratic national conventions are still months away, preparations to make them environmentally friendly are well under way. When tens of thousands of people descend on Denver for the Democratic National Convention August 25-29 and St. Paul, Minnesota, for the Republican National Convention September 1-4, they will be participants in the greenest conventions in U.S. history. By building energy-efficient offices, running fuel-efficient transportation and encouraging offsets of carbon dioxide emissions, the Democratic National Convention Committee (DNCC) says it hopes to minimize any potentially negative environmental impacts of the convention while demonstrating the economic and community benefits of "greening."



Energy-efficient buses will transport people to the Pepsi Center for the Democratic Convention in Denver. (© AP Images)

Campaign Trail Talk is your best source of information on the 2008 U.S. elections. More at: http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/USINFO/Products/online_discussions/elections.html

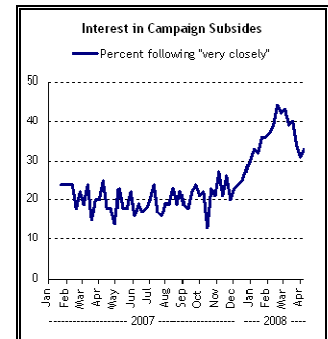
More information is available at a special **U.S. Elections page** on America.gov: <http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/>

POLLS

Pennsylvania Democratic Presidential Primary: Clinton 48% Obama 43% - The latest Rasmussen Reports (April 14, 2008) telephone survey shows Clinton leading Barack Obama by five percentage points in the Keystone State, 48% to 43%. That's little changed from a week ago, but down from a ten-point lead two weeks ago, a thirteen-point lead in mid-March and a fifteen-point advantage in early March...

A Primary Primer: Religious Voters in Pa. - In an interview (April 11, 2008) with Pew Forum Associate Director Mark O'Keefe, Senior Fellow John Green explains why the connections that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama make - or fail to make - with the state's religious voters could have major consequences on April 22.

Campaign News Interest Dips - (Pew Research Center, April 10, 2008) With the presidential campaign in something of a lull, public interest in campaign news has declined. Last week, 33% of the public paid very close attention to campaign news, down from 44% in mid-February. Public interest in the campaign, which had consistently surpassed attentiveness to previous presidential contests, is now comparable to the level measured in April 2004 (31% very closely).



56% Disagree with Obama's Comments on Small Town America - (Rasmussen Reports - April 14, 2008) Fifty-six percent (56%) of voters nationwide disagree with Barack Obama's statement that people in small towns "cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Federal Election Commission

"Federal Election Commission Regulates Presidential Campaigns - Campaign finance monitoring, public funding top commission's duties," Bureau of International Information Programs/U.S. Department of State, November 5, 2007

Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 - Campaign finance legislation enacted in 2002, often referred to as the McCain-Feingold law.

Combined Federal/State Disclosure and Election Directory 2007 - This Directory has been prepared as a guidebook to locate and identify organizations and individuals at the state and national level who have a responsibility to disclose information on money in politics.

Foreign Press Center Briefings

2008 Presidential Campaign Finance Overview, with Dr. Ben Ginsberg, Partner, Patton Boggs and NBC News Contributor, Washington, D.C., April 13, 2007

Campaign Finance and the 2008 Presidential Election, with Ciara Torres-Spelliscy, Counsel for Campaign Finance Reform Project, New York University School of Law; and Richard Briffault, Joseph P. Chamberlain Professor of Legislation, Columbia University Law School, New York, New York, April 18, 2007

MEET THE CANDIDATES (Washington Post Coverage)



DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Current Job/Position: Senator from New York

Hometown: Park Ridge, Ill.

Status: Statement of Candidacy 1/22/07

[Profile](#) | [Finance](#) | [Tracker](#)

Barack Obama

Current Job/Position: Senator from Illinois

Hometown: Jakarta, Indonesia; Honolulu, Hawaii

Status: Statement of Candidacy 2/12/07

[Profile](#) | [Finance](#) | [Tracker](#)



REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

John McCain

Current Job/Position: Senator from Arizona

Hometown: Alexandria, Va.

Status: Statement of Candidacy 11/16/06

[Profile](#) | [Finance](#) | [Tracker](#)



Pennsylvania Democratic Debate (April 16, 2008)

[Watch the full debate](#) - ABC News

[Philly Fight Night: Dems Spar Over Electability](#)

Dems Last Chance to Settle Scores Before

Pennsylvania Primary, ABC News, April 17, 2008



[Pennsylvania Democratic Debate](#) (By washingtonpost.com)

[Obama Pressed in Pa. Debate](#) (By Anne E. Kornblut and Dan Balz, Washington Post, April 17, 2008)

[Keystone Kerfuffle: First Thoughts](#) (By Chris Cillizza, Washington Post, April 17, 2008)

[ABC gets an earful after debate](#) (Philadelphia Inquirer, April 18, 2008)

Think Tanks

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research

[AEI Political Report, April 2008](#) - This issue of *Political Report* covers the personal attributes of the presidential candidates, inflation, Democratic delegate counts, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, Catholicism in America, and more.



Brookings Institution - [U.S. Presidential Elections: So Much for the Conventional Wisdom](#) -

If this most extraordinary US presidential election campaign has left you confused, join the club. Even some of Washington's most experienced pundits have been repeatedly wrong, and much of the conventional wisdom about US politics has been shattered. Here are six key assumptions going into this race that need to be reconsidered...

RealClearPolitics - [McCain's Electoral College Math](#) - ... Though there are more polls being generated this year than ever before, only two organizations are currently tracking national head-to-head matchups between McCain and either Obama or Clinton: Rasmussen and Gallup... The latest four day results from Rasmussen give McCain an 8 point lead nationally over either Clinton or Obama...



Election Calendar

[2008 Presidential Primary Dates and Candidate Filing Deadlines for Ballot Access](#) (pdf)

[2008 Republican Primary Schedule](#)

[2008 Democratic Primary Schedule](#)

ARTICLE ALERT

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO JOHN MCCAIN. Michael Hirsch. *Newsweek*, April 7, 2008, n.p. He's both the consummate pragmatist and a zealous crusader for causes he feels just. The question is which America needs now. [READ MORE](#)

OBAMA'S INNER CIRCLE. James A. Barnes. *National Journal*, March 29, 2008, pp. 26-35. Although Barack Obama has a solidly liberal voting record in the Senate, his policy advisers tend to be moderates. *National Journal* profiles 22 of his closest political and policy aides, including members of his campaign staff and his legal and foreign-policy advisers. [READ MORE](#)

WOMEN IN POLITICS. DOES GENDER BIAS HURT FEMALE CANDIDATES? Kenneth Jost. *CQ Researcher*, March 21, 2008, pp. 266-287. The number of women holding political office in the United States has grown substantially over the past two decades. But even with a near-record number of 86 women in Congress today, men still outnumber women by more than 5-to-1. Historically, women faced significant disadvantages in running for office and winning voter approval. Experts say those barriers are lower today, but perhaps not completely... For full text article – please send email to: arc_brat@state.gov

Political news and commentary:

[Obama's Gaffe and the November Election](#) (John Judis, *The New Republic*, April 15, 2008))

[Small Town Whites & the Super Delegates](#) (Jay Cost, *RealClearPolitics*, April 15, 2008))

[Where Have All the Republicans Gone?](#) (Gary Andres, *Washington Times*, April 10, 2008)

[While McCain Watches](#) (Peggy Noonan, *The Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 2008)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Discussion on U.S. Elections: "After Pennsylvania Primary"

**April 29 at 17:00 at the InfoUSA - University Library,
Michalská 1, Bratislava**



Panelists - Milan Ježovica (Mesa 10), Jan Surotchak (IRI), and Prof. Kevin Deegan-Krause (Associate Professor of Political Science, Wayne State University) - moderated by Chip Laitinen (U.S. Embassy)

From an introduction to U.S. election system and highlights of this year's election to discussing the results of the Pennsylvania Primary and what it really means for the Democrats.

R.S.V.P. – E-mail: arc_brat@state.gov or socuvkao@state.gov by April 28, 2008

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